

Living Water Fellowship

1st Sunday in Lent – 9th March 2025

COME TO JESUS

GATHERING MUSIC: VIDEO – GREAT ARE YOU LORD (*All Sons & Daughters*)

WELCOME & PRAYER:

OPENING SONG: Potters Hand

GROW IN HIS GRACE

BIBLE READING: Matthew 18:21-35

²¹ Then Peter came to Jesus & asked, “Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?” ²² “No, not seven times,” Jesus replied, “but seventy times seven!”

²³ “Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven can be compared to a king who decided to bring his accounts up to date with servants who had borrowed money from him. ²⁴ In the process, one of his debtors was brought in who owed him millions of dollars. ²⁵ He couldn’t pay, so his master ordered that he be sold—along with his wife, his children, & everything he owned—to pay the debt. ²⁶ “But the man fell down before his master & begged him, ‘Please, be patient with me, & I will pay it all.’ ²⁷ Then his master was filled with pity for him, & he released him & forgave his debt.

²⁸ “But when the man left the king, he went to a fellow servant who owed him a few thousand dollars. He grabbed him by the throat & demanded instant payment. ²⁹ “His fellow servant fell down before him & begged for a little more time. ‘Be patient with me, & I will pay it,’ he pleaded. ³⁰ But his creditor wouldn’t wait. He had the man arrested & put in prison until the debt could be paid in full.

³¹ “When some of the other servants saw this, they were very upset. They went to the king & told him everything that had happened. ³² Then the king called in the man he had forgiven & said, ‘You evil servant! I forgave you that tremendous debt because you pleaded with me.

³³ Shouldn’t you have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴ Then the angry king sent the man to prison to be tortured until he had paid his entire debt.

³⁵ “That’s what my heavenly Father will do to you if you refuse to forgive your brothers & sisters from your heart.”

CHILDREN’S TIME:

SONG: Jesus Strong and Kind

Group Bible Study/Discussion:

1. Read Matthew 18:21-35 & Jeremiah 15:15-20. What strikes you in these verses?
2. What kinds of “sins” do you think Peter had in mind in vs 21? Peter’s question shows he had already learned something about forgiveness. What does his question imply that he knew? How many times did Jesus say we should forgive? What do you think his answer means?
3. If this story Jesus told represents God’s kingdom, it implies that Jesus believed people owe a great debt to God that he is willing to forgive. What debt would people owe to God that would need forgiveness? How would you communicate that to someone who has no background in the church or no understanding of sin as something other than “being bad”?
4. What effects does not practicing forgiveness have on our lives? What dangers do you sense with limitless forgiveness? Does that seem to be a concern with Jesus? Why/not? When you forgive, who is impacted most? How is Jesus at work there?
5. When we refuse to forgive, to whom are we denying the greater gift?
6. Read verses 34-35 again. How does my holding someone’s sin against them in fact bind it equally upon me?
7. Jeremiah is complaining that God is not protecting him as God promised despite Jeremiah’s faithful service as a prophet. Have you ever felt “let down” by God? What did you do? How was that circumstance resolved?
8. How does God equip you for your role as a witness/prophet to his saving love in Jesus? Is that enough, or is there more you need for his word to work effectively through you?
9. How can we ensure that our words are “good or worthy” instead of “worthless”? What is required of us in being an influence rather than being influenced? How well do you think you are carrying out that call from God?
10. What does Jesus, in His Word, today call you to do in the week ahead?

Remember:

Reconciliation is the unnatural action of the redeemed to preserve relationships in the forgiving strength of Christ.

Continue praying through the week:

***Father prepare me for whatever you require today
and lead me in faith wherever you call me to go.
In Jesus’ Name...Amen.***

BIBLE READING: Jeremiah 15:15-20

¹⁵ Then I said, "Lord, you know what's happening to me. Please step in & help me. Punish my persecutors! Please give me time; don't let me die young. It's for your sake that I am suffering. ¹⁶ When I discovered your words, I devoured them. They are my joy & my heart's delight, for I bear your name, O Lord God of Heaven's Armies.

¹⁷ I never joined the people in their merry feasts. I sat alone because your hand was on me. I was filled with indignation at their sins. ¹⁸ Why then does my suffering continue? Why is my wound so incurable? Your help seems as uncertain as a seasonal brook, like a spring that has gone dry."

¹⁹ This is how the Lord responds:

"If you return to me, I will restore you so you can continue to serve me.

If you speak good words rather than worthless ones, you will be my spokesman.

You must influence them; do not let them influence you!

²⁰ They will fight against you like an attacking army, but I will make you as secure as a fortified wall of bronze. They will not conquer you, for I am with you to protect & rescue you. I, the Lord, have spoken!

FAITH CHAT:

1. What's the greatest challenge in forgiving someone who has genuinely hurt you?
2. When have you felt most "disappointed" or "let down" by God? What did you do?

THE MESSAGE: WHOLE-HEARTED RECONCILIATION

OFFERING SONG:

PRAYERS:

THE COMMUNION:

Preparation

Sisters & brothers in Christ, long ago a singer of psalms said:

*"When I refused to admit my sin, my life wasted away,
I groaned & complained all day long.*

*When I acknowledged my sin to you, holding nothing back,
you forgave my sin & removed my shame."*

Heavenly Father, we confess that we often fail in the hour of temptation. We put up a worthy fight, but lose in an unguarded moment. We make light of what's at stake & corrupt ourselves in a dozen mini betrayals. We do not even realise how far we have wandered until we discover our disastrous destination. We believe the Tempter when he says your ways are unfair, & we rebelliously turn our backs on you.

God of mercy reclaim & forgive us. Remove our guilt and the mental deception through which we seek to excuse ourselves. Give us a new start. Keep us alert without anxiety & courageous without pride. Through Jesus Christ our Saviour Amen!

My sisters & brothers in Christ Jesus, it is written:

"While we were still sinners, Christ Jesus died for us." and again...

"Most happy are they whose sin is forgiven!"

Be glad & celebrate, all you recipients of grace.

Shout for joy all you with hearts fully opened by Christ's love!

Words of Institution & The Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, & the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Worship during Communion:

VIDEO – I WANT TO KNOW YOU (CityAlight)

GO IN HIS POWER

THE BLESSING:

(Name), † child of God...

***You are reconciled to the Father
to be a reconciler in Jesus' name!
-- Amen.***

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

SONG: Shout to the Lord

SHOW HIS LOVE